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### REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants have amended the Specification to correct several typographical errors.

In the Office Action of March 17, 2006, claims 3 and 10 were objected to. The Examiner questioned whether Applicants had intended to recite materials containing Re (Rhenium) in clause (f) of those claims. Applicants hereby confirm that the recited material should indeed be Re.

Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ashton, U. S. Patent No. 4,038,514. Ashton '514 discloses a method of stick welding using a consumable electrode and a means for supplying a shielding gas therearound. Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to recite in part: "placing the sheets between a pair of electrodes and passing electrical current through the sheets." Independent claim 10 has been amended to recite in part: "placing the workpieces between a pair of electrodes and passing electrical current through the two workpieces." Independent claims 1 and 10 are no longer anticipated by Ashton '514. Withdraw of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8, 11 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ashton. Again, Ashton is directed to stick welding using a consumable electrode which is placed between a V cut between two substrates. The amendment to claim 1 reciting in part "placing the sheets between a pair of electrodes and passing electrical current through the sheets" is not suggested by Ashton.

Applicants have canceled claims 9 and 14-22 pursuant to the restriction requirement. Applicants have added new claims 23-28.

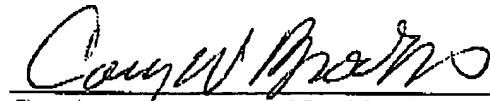
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Applicants hereby authorize the Examiner to charge Deposit Account No. 07-0960 the fee for the added new claims.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the claims now in the case.

Respectfully submitted,

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